

# **KINDERGARTNERS**

## **OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND ADULT LICENSING**



**STATE OF MICHIGAN**  
**Department of Human Services**

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# WHAT ARE KINDERGARTNERS LIKE?

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## Susie – 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday

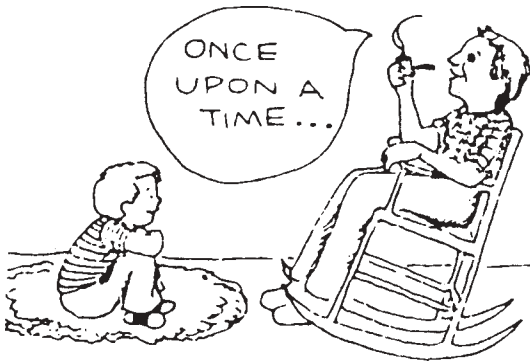
Active, concerned, and thinking individuals — that's what five-year-olds are. They sense they are growing up and seem to like it. Activities have a purpose and ideas are clear. They take pride and interest in their projects.

This is a period of uneven growth — knock-knees and fat stomachs begin to disappear. Legs grow faster than other parts of the body. Give the children plenty of exercise — they need it and enjoy it! However, time for quiet play and rest is still very important. You may notice that five-year-olds have a good appetite; snacks are still necessary.

These youngsters have strong likes and dislikes. "I hate applesauce," or "My old boots look better" is their way of saying, "I am independent." So, respect their choices and allow them to make decisions. Trust them with errands and simple chores. Praise them for their small successes. Allow them to explore and find out about things. But be there to provide them with security and comfort.

Five-year-olds are ready to share and respect the belongings of others. They enjoy working in small groups, but may still quarrel. A well-planned activity and a simple set of rules can prevent many arguments.

In many ways, five is an age of delight. These children love to make things and are proud of their finished work. Show them how to mix colors, shape playdough into beads, and cut out simple paper dolls. Let them create! Teach them to take care of the materials they use.



Talk, talk, talk — they seem to chatter all day. Now words instead of fists can settle quarrels. Words instead of tears can express feelings. Five-year-olds are old enough to listen and take turns. Let them “read” picture books, tell them stories. Action, humor, repeated words or sentences will excite them. “I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll blow your house down” is a good example.

Adults are important to five-year-olds. They look to them for guidance and praise. They imitate grown-ups when they play teacher, nurse, doctor, father or mother.



Five-year-olds need some freedom. Allow them times to be noisy and active. Encourage them to use their new skills. This independence gives them a feeling of accomplishment and helps prepare them for first grade.



**Susie – 6 Years**

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# WHAT CAN KINDERGARTNERS DO?

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Five-year-olds grow up in leaps and bounds. Here is a description of how most of them grow and develop, but remember that not every child will develop exactly the same way. Since the five-year-old is growing in so many different ways, it is helpful to divide growth into four areas. These are:



## SENSORY-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

Sensory-motor development is the change in the way children use their muscles to move around and do things. There are two kinds of muscles. **Large muscles** are used for walking and bending. **Small muscles** are used for pointing and picking up things. Children also use their muscles as they learn to take care of themselves. This is called **self-help**.

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language development is the children's growing ability to listen, understand, and use words to express themselves.

## SOCIAL-PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social-personal development includes the children's growing awareness of themselves, how they feel about children and adults, and how they play and talk with others.

## COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Cognitive development is the growing ability to listen, understand and follow directions. This area also includes the way children think, reason, and solve problems.



## SENSORY-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

### LARGE MUSCLE

Now children can:

1. walk fast, slowly, quietly, loudly or on tip-toes,
2. skip and climb,

3. march and gallop,
4. hop two or three yards forward on both feet or one foot,
5. climb up and down stairs using one foot after another,
6. balance on the balls of both feet or on one foot for five seconds,
7. move to music,
8. bounce and catch a ball,
9. ride a tricycle,
10. jump over low objects,
11. jump rope three times in a row,
12. play simple action games such as relay races,
13. bounce a ball ten times in a row, and
14. do stunts such as somersaults and rolls.



## SMALL MUSCLES

Five-year-olds can:

1. use fingers to make clay balls, snakes, and pancakes,
2. use their hands and fingers easily in fingerplays,
3. pour rice from one container to another without spilling,
4. pour liquid from a small pitcher into a cup without spilling,
5. string beads following a model,
6. work a ten to twenty piece puzzle,
7. fold and crease paper,
8. cut along straight or curved lines,
9. cut out simple figures with straight edges,
10. draw lines with a crayon from left to right, right to left, and top to bottom,

11. draw triangles, circles, and squares using a model,
12. draw a human figure with head, body, arms, legs, and features,
13. draw a simple house with door, windows, roof, and chimney, and
14. write a few letters.

## SELF-HELP

These children can:

1. wash themselves,
2. feed themselves easily,
3. use a knife for cutting,
4. dress and undress themselves with little trouble,
5. try to tie and buckle shoes, and
6. go to the toilet by themselves.

## LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

At five, children:

1. listen for longer periods of time,
2. learn to use new words,
3. pronounce words clearly and use sentences,
4. imitate sounds or rhythm patterns,
5. identify animal sounds, voices, and general sounds,
6. repeat nursery rhymes, poems, or songs,
7. ask or answer who, what, why, when, where, or how questions,
8. use words to tell you their needs, fears, feelings, and ideas,



9. enjoy telling stories about things that happened at home,
10. act out stories,
11. enjoy listening to stories,
12. recall events in the same order as they happened,
13. repeat at least five simple words in the same order that they hear them,
14. follow a direction of at least three steps,
15. say their full name and address, and
16. use future tense.

## SOCIAL-PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The children:

1. play simple table games such as picture bingo,
2. will work and play well with children, but may sometimes prefer to be left alone,
3. can share, and understand taking turns,
4. make friends with others who have the same interests,



5. like to run errands,
6. take responsibility for their own actions,
7. listen quietly when someone else is talking, and wait their turn to speak,
8. pick up and put belongings and toys away,
9. are proud of and take care of their possessions and clothes,
10. want to be like other children or adults,
11. quarrel less often,
12. follow a child who is a leader, or want to be a leader,
13. respect each other's belongings,
14. know rules are necessary and look to adults for authority and security, and
15. may take rules too seriously, become bossy, and tell tales too often.

## COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

The children:

1. like to finish projects they have started,
2. begin to tell the difference between the truth and a lie,
3. are eager to get to work,
4. will sometimes remember and work on an activity from one day to the next,
5. are critical of their own work,
6. often have their own idea for an activity,



7. have a definite purpose in using objects,
8. tell similarities and differences,
9. select the heavier of two objects,
10. define simple words,
11. know the names of coins such as penny, nickel, and dime,
12. count up to ten objects and answer the questions, "How many?",
13. recognize and name numbers zero to ten,
14. count 1-20,
15. print numbers one to five,
16. tell the bigger of two things,
17. copy their first and last names in printing,
18. match and name the colors red, orange, yellow, blue, green, purple, white, pink, brown, black, gray and tan,
19. group objects that are the same in length, weight, height, and size,
20. name the shapes: triangle, square, rectangle, diamond, and circle,
21. use words to describe the location of an object,
22. give their own age and birthday,
23. name days of week, and
24. know own right or left arms or hands.

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# WHAT DO KINDERGARTNERS NEED:

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## SOME DO'S AND DON'TS

### DO'S

- DO — have good lighting in areas where children draw or look at books.
- DO — give the children their own washcloths.
- DO — pay attention to the complaints the children make about their eyes and ears.

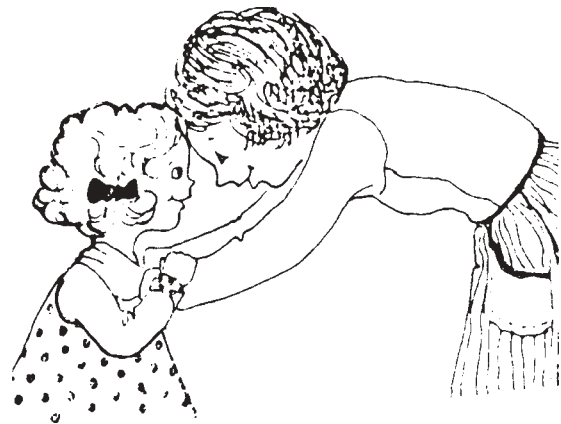


- DO — give security, love, and affection.
- DO — praise often.
- DO — set simple, clear routines and rules.
- DO — ignore bad behavior as much as possible.
- DO — give children the chance to learn to share and to play with other children.
- DO — listen to the children.
- DO — encourage the children to begin their own activities.
- DO — let your children help you.
- DO — show the children how to use tools and kitchen equipment safely.
- DO — show the children good behavior.
- DO — teach the children how to cross the street safely.



### DON'TS

- DON'T — force the children to do things they are not ready for such as read and write.
- DON'T — punish children when they make mistakes. Children learn by making mistakes.
- DON'T — encourage the children to watch television all the time. Carefully select programs that are good for children.





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# EARLY WARNING SIGNS

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Your five-year-olds are growing up. They are more active, alert, and curious. Children will grow at their own special rate. You should expect a wide range of development among children of the same age. However, problems may arise that need your attention. The earlier the problems are found, the more the children can be helped.

If children seem to act differently from others their age, it may be that their styles are different. Some troublesome behavior may be caused by a physical need. The following lists will help you look for these “warning signs” of problems that may need further care.

If you continue to be concerned you may want to contact your local health department and request that a public health nurse visit your home to observe the children in question.

## PHYSICAL NEEDS

Children of this age have control over their movements. Yet, some children are clumsier than others and may have trouble controlling their bodies. This could be the sign of a problem. You should talk with the parents about it to prevent the problem from getting more serious.

These are some of signs of physical needs:

1. The child cannot control his or her arms or legs. He or she makes frequent jerky movements.
2. The child falls a lot, walks poorly, or can't walk at all.
3. The child holds one hand to his or her side and never used it to pick up or hold toys.
4. The child's neck, arms, or legs are still and hard to move.
5. The child drools all the time.
6. The child falls asleep at times when he or she is normally awake.

7. The child often faints, wets, or soils pants even though toilet-trained, and lies on the floor with arms and legs stiff. The child then jerks his or her body around with the back arched. The child will sleep deeply afterwards.

Signs of problems that need a doctor's advise are:

1. infected cuts or bites that have swelling or a white look around them for more than three days,
2. many skin rashes, lumps or sores,
3. throwing-up and high fevers that last for a long time,
4. constant coughing,



5. refusing to eat for more than three days,
6. continual diarrhea, or
7. unusual paleness and coldness of the skin.



## GET A DOCTOR'S HELP

8. If a child falls and hits his or her head, watch for these signs:

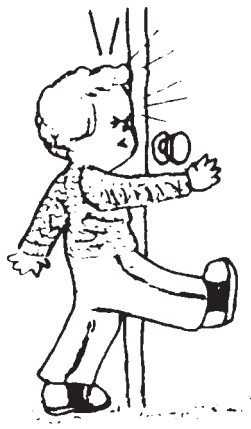
dizziness,  
headache,  
throwing-up,  
sleepiness, or  
wetting.

If you see a combination of these signs, call the doctor right away. Allow the child to rest quietly or sleep. Check the child every half hour.

## SIGHT NEEDS

Poor eyesight can cause a child to feel miserable. These are some of the signs for sight needs.

1. The child rubs his or her eyes.
2. The child may squint or hold objects close to his or her eyes to see them.
3. The child complains that "things look fuzzy" or that he or she is "seeing double."
4. The child complains of dizziness, headaches, or feeling sick to the stomach after doing close work.
5. The child often bumps into things.
6. The child's eyes are often swollen, crusty, or red and watery.
7. The child rolls his or her eyes around, is cross-eyed, or doesn't use both eyes to follow objects.



8. The child is unable to see things which are far away.
9. The child often waves fingers in front of his or her eyes.
10. The child doesn't point to, wave back, or imitate other people.
11. The child complains of itching or burning eyes.



## HEARING NEEDS

Sometimes when a child is cranky or does not pay attention to you, it may be because of a hearing problem.

These are some warning signs of hearing needs.

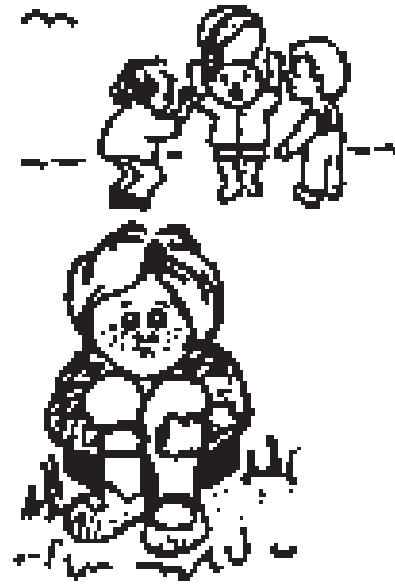
1. The child constantly watches your face and lips when you talk.
2. The child often asks you to repeat things you have said.
3. The child doesn't talk.
4. The child doesn't follow directions, or react to loud sounds when his or her back is turned.
5. The child doesn't come when called.
6. The child has many earaches or has a runny fluid coming from the ear.
7. The child has little voice control. He or she screams a lot or makes strange sounds.
8. The child bumps his or her head on the pillow in bed to go to sleep.

# LEARNING NEEDS

Some children learn more slowly than others and need special help.

These are some things to look for.

1. The child doesn't walk or talk by age five.
2. The child has trouble understanding or remembering simple directions.
3. The child has trouble doing many sensory-motor activities, especially those skills which require the child to use hands and eyes together such as putting clothespins in a bowl.
4. The child cannot point to different parts of his or her body when asked.



# EMOTIONAL NEEDS

When a child is upset, he or she may hit, cry, bite or kick. If the child does these things **most** of the time, something may be wrong.

1. The child often cries without a reason.
2. The child never plays with other children and prefers to be left alone in the corner or in bed.
3. The child doesn't seem to enjoy being held or touched.
4. The child often hurts his or her own body by hitting or biting.
5. The child constantly rocks back and forth and makes funny noises.
6. The child does the same movement over and over.
7. The child suddenly changes his or her behavior.
8. The child says the same things over and over.
9. The child never says anything on his or her own and only repeats words after hearing them from another person.
10. The child hits, kicks, or bites **every** time he or she tries to play with other children.

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